

Application No.: 09/886,325

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A support system for diagnosing printer problems, comprising:

a support server having a rules engine for parsing printer diagnostic data into components, for analyzing the components and for generating a suggested solution based on combinations of printer diagnostic data and error conditions;

wherein the support server further including a printer diagnostics utility, and

wherein responsive to a request for support from a printer at least one printer, located remote from the support server, wherein the printer includes a printer driver, responsive to a request for support, for communicating with the support server, the support server transmits the printer diagnostics utility to the printer;

wherein, upon receipt and installation of the printer diagnostics utility, the printer generates printer diagnostic data and wherein, responsive to a request for support from the printer, the printer transmits the generated printer diagnostic data to the support server; and

wherein, responsive to the generated printer diagnostic data, the rules engine parses and analyzes the printer diagnostic data and generates a suggested solution and the support server transmits the suggested solution to the printer.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the support server and the printer communicate over the Internet.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the printer driver further includes a usage profile utility for generating and storing usage information and printer status information

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during operation of the printer and wherein, responsive to the request for support from the printer, the printer transmits the usage profile information and printer status information to the support server.

5. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the printer further comprises a web browser for pointing to a web page at the support server.

6. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the printer further comprises a web server for generating web pages pertaining to the printer.

7. (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein the printer and the support server communicate over the Internet via a web browser;

wherein the printer driver further includes a usage profile utility for generating and storing usage information and printer status information during operation of the printer; and

wherein, responsive to the request for support from the printer, the web server attaches the usage profile information and printer status information to a web page for the printer and transmits the web page to the support server.

8. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the printer has a unique identifier and wherein the support server further comprises a memory for storing historical information pertaining to the printer comprising a record of the request for support, the printer diagnostic data and the suggested solution.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the support server transmits historical information to the printer.

10. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the support server verifies warranty information for the printer.

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11. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein, the printer further comprises a processor, a memory storing a web browser and an input/output device having a display.

12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the printer is coupled to an input/output device for receiving user requests for support and for displaying received solutions.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the input/output device comprises a personal computer.

14. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the input/output device comprises a wireless device.

15. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the input/output device comprises a processor, a memory and a front panel display in the printer.

16. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein on receipt of the suggested solution, the printer executes the suggested solution.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of remotely diagnosing printer problems in a support system having a support server, the support server having a rules engine for parsing printer diagnostic data into components, for analyzing the components and for generating a suggested solution based on combinations of printer diagnostic data and error conditions and at least one printer located remote from the support server, comprising:

 sending a request for support from the printer to the support server;

responsive to the request for support, transmitting a printer diagnostic utility from the support server to the printer;

upon receipt and installation of the printer diagnostics utility at the printer, generating

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printer diagnostic data:

transmitting the generated printer diagnostic data to the support server;
~~using a rules engine to parsing~~ the generated printer diagnostic data into components and
~~to analyze~~analyzing the components;
generating a suggested solution based on combinations of printer diagnostic data and
error conditions; and
transmitting the suggested solution to the printer.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the support server and the printer communicate over the Internet.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the printer includes a printer driver having a web browser for pointing to a web page at the support server and wherein the step of sending a request for support from the printer to the support server comprises accessing the web browser.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein prior to sending a request for support, generating printer diagnostic data at the printer during operation of the printer and storing the user profile information and printer status information at the printer.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the printer diagnostic data comprises usage profile information and printer status information.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising storing historical information pertaining to the printer comprising a record of the request for support, the printer diagnostic data and the suggested solution at the support server.

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25. (Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising transmitting stored historical information to the printer.

26. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising verifying warranty information for the printer.